

SOME NOTES ON THE GAṄGĀ-MĀHĀTMYA
IN THE NĀRADA-PURĀṆA *

In the year 1952 the Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan, Prayāg brought out a book entitled *Purāṇō mē Gaṅgā*, based on puranic texts pertaining to the holy river collected and translated into Hindī by Rām Pratāp Tri-pāthī. It was edited by Dayāśankar Dube. The work is divided into three parts, namely:

- *Śrī Gaṅgā-māhātmya*, in six chapters,
- *Utpatti-khaṇḍa*, in fourteen chapters,
- *Stuti-khaṇḍa*, in six chapters.

It contains also an Appendix (*Parīśiṣṭa*) reproducing three chapters of the *Brahmavaivarta-Purāṇa*¹. The present paper is confined only to

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1. No reference is given. As far as the *Stuti-khaṇḍa* and the *Parīśiṣṭa* are concerned, they are as follows:

Stuti-khaṇḍa I = BvP II, 10, 97-110.

II = *Skanda-Purāṇa, Kedāra-khaṇḍa* (Veṅkaṭeśvara ed., Bombay, 1906) 38, 7-168 (chapters 27 to 29 of this text — which, it is to be noted, is quite different from the *Kedāra-khaṇḍa* of the vulgate edition of the *Skanda-Purāṇa* brought out in 1908-1909 by the same Publisher — contain the *Sagaropākhyāna*, and chapters 30 to 40 the *Bhagīrathopākhyāna* together with the *Gaṅgāvatarāṇa*).

III = BvP II, 10, 114-135.

IV = SkP IV, *Kāśī-khaṇḍa*, part I, 27, 35-84.

Parīśiṣṭa I = BvP II, 10, 1-90.

II = BvP II, 11, 1-142 (complete).

III = BvP II, 12, 1-23 (complete).

parts one and two of the book. They, in fact, form a homogeneous text, which, in my opinion, should have been entitled *Gaṅgā-māhātmya* and divided in two parts: *Māhātmya-khaṇḍa* and *Utpatti-khaṇḍa*. It is important to note that the selections have been made from one and only *Purāṇa*, the *Nāradiya*- or *Bṛhannāradiya-Purāṇa*², so far as the *Gaṅgā-māhātmya* is concerned.

As Tripāthī states in his *Bhūmikā*³, there are many puranic texts dealing with the sacred river Gaṅgā⁴, but among them that of the *Nārada-Purāṇa* is particularly interesting, for it is the most complete and exhaustive. In this comparatively modern compilation, the topics are arranged in a way quite different from the one of the source (as it can easily be seen in Appendixes I and II) and it seems that the text has been adapted once more to suit the requirements of the compiler, in the same way as the *paurāṇika*-s have been taking liberty with these texts from the times immemorial. In this new form given to it by Tripāthī, the text, nevertheless, has some logic in the sequence of the various topics, which, briefly, are as follows:

1. Introduction and first eulogy of Gaṅgā (PmG-GM I)

Invocation to Vyāsa and to Ādideva. Meeting of Saunaka and other *muni*-s and their decision to approach the *paurāṇika* Sūta in the Sid-

2. Cfr. *NāP* I, 1-2; 6-11; 12; 15-16; II, 38-43. A table of concordance is presented in Appendix I of the present paper. The *Bṛhannāradiya-Purāṇa* of the Venkateśvar Press edition is not to be confounded with the *Bṛhannāradiya-Purāṇa* edited in Vārāṇasī, Caukhambā Amarbhārtī Prakāśan, by Pt. Hṛṣīkeś Śāstrī in 1891 (2nd ed., 1957). This text is an *Upapurāṇa*: it consists of 38 *adhyāya*-s, which correspond to *adhyāya* 1 to 41 of the *Nāradiya-Mahāpurāṇa* (cfr. R. C. HAZRA, *Studies in the Puranic Records on Hindu Rites and Customs*, Delhi, 2nd ed., 1975, p. 130).

3. Cfr. *Purāṇō mē Gaṅgā*, cit., p. gha.

4. The references given in the *Bhūmikā* are often uncorrect and mostly incomplete. The main puranic texts dealing with Gaṅgā are the following ones (refer to Appendix V for Abbreviations): *AP* 110; 273, 30ab; *BhP* I, 8, 2 and 19, 5-6; III, 5, 40; IV, 21, 31; V, 17; VIII, 21, 3-4; IX, 9, 1-14 and 15, 3; X, 41, 15 and 70, 44; *BrP* 8, 75cd-77ab; 63, 15; 71, 3; 73, 60-64; 74-76; 78; 90, 32-33; 105, 20ab; 107, 59 ff.; 119; 172-175; *BṛṇP* I, ii, 18; II, iii, 54, 48-51; II, iii, 56, 34-54; II, iii, 63, 25-28; *BvP* II, 6 and 10-12; III, 3, 36; IV 34 and 35, 1-7 *DhP* II, 3-4; VIII, 7; IX, 1, 60 ff.; IX, 6-8 and 11-14; *GP* I, 138, 30cd; *KP* I, 12, 21; I, 16, 56; I, 20, 9-10; I, 34, 29; I, 35, 29-38 (*Prayāga-māhātmya*); I, 44, 28 ff.; *LP* I, 52, 1-10; I, 66, 19-20; I, 82, 88; *MārP* 12, 44; 56; *MtP* 104, 13-19 and 106, 53-56 (*Prayāga-māhātmya*); 121, 37-42; 180-185 (*Kāśī-māhātmya*); *NāP* I, 6-11 and 16; I, 119, 7-9; II, 38-43; II, 51, 1-18 (*Vārāṇasī-māhātmya*); *SK* 16; 29, 55; *PP* I, 33-37 (*Kāśī-māhātmya*); V, 8, 149 f.; V, 25, 182-184; V, 60; VI, 21-23; VI, 82; VI, 267, 42-44; *SP*, *Koṭirudrasaṃhitā* 4; *Umāsaṃhitā* 39, 7cd-8ab; *Vāyaviya-saṃhitā* 40; *SkP* I, i, 17, 69; I, i, 19, 14-16; I, ii, 58, 6-7; I, iii/i, 6, 98 = I, iii/i, 12, 3; III, ii, 31, 7; IV, i, 27-29; IV, ii, 92; V, i, 68, 7; VII, ii, 18, 270-276; *VāmP*, *Saromāhātmya* 13, 7; *VāmP* 65, 33-34; *VarP* 71, 33 ff.; 82; *VāP* I, 42 and 47; II, 26, 167 f.; *VP* II, 2, 33-34; II, 4, 28-31 and 35; II, 8, 108-117. For a rather complete description of the *Sāgara-Gaṅgāvatarāṇa* myth in the Sanskrit epics and the *Purāṇa*-s see ANDREAS BOCK, *Der Sāgara-Gaṅgāvatarāṇa-Mythos in der episch-purānischen Literatur*, in « Alt- und Neu-Indische Studien », herausgegeben vom Seminar für Kultur und Geschichte Indiens an der Universität Hamburg, no. 27, Stuttgart, 1984.

dhāśrama in order to put some questions to him. Sūta, in his turn, reports a dialogue between Nārada and Sanaka, who is the narrator of one part of our text, the other being Vasu. Sanaka narrates the *param guhyam*, i.e. the great secret, which may be the *māhātmya* itself of the holy river: first eulogy of Gaṅgā (GM I, 32-71).

2. The evidence (GM II-III)

The story of Saudāsa Mitrasaha Kalmāṣapāda: it contains also a description of the *guru* (III, 31-56) and a short eulogy of Gaṅgā (III, 88-91).

3. The great eulogy - Part one (GM IV-VI)

Gaṅgā-māhātmya expounded by Vasu to Mohinī: the greatness and the glory of the sacred river and its excellence among the *tīrtha*-s. Merits connected with *darśana-sparśa-pāna*, *snāna* and *smaraṇa*. Particular merit of *snāna* at different places and times. List of *tīrtha*-s (GM VI, 28-52).

4. The origin of the holy river (UK I-IV)

The victory of Bali and other Daitya-s over the Deva-s and the penance of Aditi. Viṣṇu appears to Aditi, who recites a *stotra* in his honour (UK II, 19-39). Viṣṇu's birth as Aditi's son, Vāmana; *stotra* recited by Kaśyapa (UK III, 5-15). Vāmana's presence in the *dirghasattra* of Bali and his request for three steps of land. Vāmana's narration of the efficacy and importance of the *bhūmidāna*: the story of the poor *brāhmaṇa* Bhadramati. The three steps of Viṣṇu Trivikrama and the origin of the *ākāśa*-Gaṅgā flowing through the crevice produced by the toe of Viṣṇu in the shell of the cosmic egg. *Stotra* recited by the gods (UK IV, 46cd-49ab).

5. The descent of the holy river on the earth (UK V-X)

The story of Bāhu and the birth of Sagara in Aurva's *āśrama*. The two wives of Sagara, Keśinī and Sumati, give birth respectively to Asamañjas and to the 60.000 Sāgara-s. The episode of the horse of Sagara's *aśvamedha*: the 60.000 Sāgara-s are reduced to ashes by the sage Kapila in the Pātāla. Amśumat, son of Asamañjas, recovers the horse and the *aśvamedha* is celebrated. The story of Bhagīratha: dialogues of the king with Dharmarāja and Bhṛgu. The penance of Bhagīratha. The *deva*-s approach Viṣṇu, reciting a *stotra* in his honour (UK X, 11cd-19ab). Viṣṇu appears to Bhagīratha and suggests to pray to Śiva, which the king does by a *stotra* (UK X, 35cd-53). Bhagīratha receives Gaṅgā as a gift from Śiva. The ashes of the Sāgara-s are purified and they reach the Viṣṇuloka.

6. The great eulogy - Part two (UK XI-XIV)

The special value of *snāna*, *vrata*-s and other practices when performed on the banks of the Gaṅgā. Description of the *mūrti* of the Goddess which is to be worshipped. The importance of *dāna*. Description of the various *godāna*-s (specially of the gift of a *guḍadhenu*) and of *Gaṅgā-pūjā*. *Stotra* in honour of Gaṅgā (UK XIV, 9-24). The greatness of Gaṅgā, identified with the Supreme Being. Expanse of *garbha*, *tīra* and *kṣetra* of the Gaṅgā. Efficacy of the reading or listening of the *Gaṅgā-māhātmya*.

The sequence of the topics in the two texts (*PmG* and *Nāp*) is different and is analysed in Appendix II, according to the six parts of the story just dealt with.

In the text of the *Nārada-Purāṇa*, part I, at the end of the story of Mārkaṇḍeya, which aims at illustrating the greatness of the devotion to the Lord, it is said that the *ṛṣi* performed a great penance in the sacred village of Śālāgrāma and attained *nirvāṇa* through deep meditation. This seems to justify the question of Nārada, who asks Sanaka to describe the holiest *tīrtha* in the world. Sanaka begins with the eulogy of Gaṅgā in chapter 6, and then narrates the story of the kings of the solar dynasty from Bāhu and Sagara (chapters 7-8) up to Saudāsa, whose liberation is an evidence of the supernatural power of the waters of the holy river (chapter 9). The origin of the heavenly Gaṅgā comes only in the second place (chapters 10-11) and lastly is narrated its descent on the earth owing to the penance of king Bhagīratha (chapters 12/15/16).

It is well known that more than the half of part II of the *Nārada-Purāṇa*, i.e. chapters 38 to 81, is devoted to the description of *tīrtha*-s or holy places: this section is presented in the form of a dialogue between Mohinī, wife of Rukmāṅgada, and his *purohita* Vasu. Vasu, worried about Mohinī's salvation, suggests to her the *tīrtha-yātrā* as the best means for attaining it, and begins by describing the greatness of the river Gaṅgā, the *māhātmya* of which is contained in the first six chapters of the section itself. *NāP* II, 38-43 is, therefore, nothing but a *māhātmya*, with all the ingredients and characteristics of this particular literary genre⁵.

This *māhātmya* is divided into two parts consisting of three chapters each in the collection of Tripāṭhī: the first one is inserted just after the story of Saudāsa — which immediately follows the introductory chapter — and the second one concludes the text. A very interesting detail, found at the end of the last chapter of section one, is noteworthy: there are

5. Cfr. J. GONDA, *Medieval Religious Literature in Sanskrit*. Ch. XV: *Gitās, Māhātmyas and other Religious Literature*, «A History of Indian Literature», vol. II: *Epics and Sanskrit Religious Literature*, fc. 1, Wiesbaden, 1977, pp. 271-86; S. PIANO, *Le «celebrazioni» dei luoghi santi nella tradizione religiosa dell'Induismo*, in «Aevum», LIII, 2, 1979, pp. 213-29.

mentioned two persons, who are closely connected with the myth of the origin of the heavenly Gaṅgā opening the UK section: they are Agastya⁶, who drank up the ocean — which could be filled again only by the waters of the Gaṅgā⁷ — and Aditi⁸, whose hard penance succeeded in causing Viṣṇu to incarnate in Vāmana Trivikrama. As far as section two is concerned, it draws its title from v. 2 of its first chapter (=NāP I, 10, 2), where Sanaka says that he « will narrate the origin of the Gaṅgā » (...*vakṣyāmi gaṅgotpattim*...), introduced by the story of Bali and Vāmana.

While reading, translating and commenting upon a sanskrit text like this, many hermeneutical problems are met with by the scholar; they arise from the very nature of the puranic texts — which represent various phases of interpretation of the one and only truth contained in the *Veda*-s⁹ and are different compilations of the same and very old materials, characterized by the liking and requirements of the times —, and also from the little accuracy of the available printed texts¹⁰. I also met many such problems during the present study. In order to solve them I had to make a series of collateral reseaches, each of them involving the whole puranic literature or, at least, the whole set of *Mahā-purāṇa*-s (including *Siva*- and *Devībhāgavata-Purāṇa*). Thanks to this work I was able to arrive at some useful and interesting results and to better explain the obscure passages of the text under observation. I will now dwell upon a few aspects of this study, as a few examples, for my work is still in progress and other interesting problems can arise before it comes to a completion.

I. The story of Saudāsa

The story of king Mitrasaha, also called Saudāsa and Kalmāṣapāda, of the solar Ikṣvāku dynasty is narrated in the first *parvan* of the

6. Cfr. *PmG-GM* VI, 43.

7. Cfr. *MBh* III, 109. 20ab: *pūraṇārthaṃ samudrasya pṛthivīm avatāritā*; BrP 8, 71ab: *agastyapitasyāmbhodheḥ pūraṇāya viśeṣataḥ*.

8. Cfr. *PmG-GM* VI, 46-47 = NāP II, 40, 91-92.

9. For the three different attitudes of the *Purāṇa*-s towards the *Veda*-s, see G. BONAZZOLI, *Remarks on the nature of the Purāṇa*-s, in « *Purāṇa* » XXI, 1, 1983, pp. 87-93 and 98f.

10. As far as the puranic literature is concerned, the want of accurate editions of the texts is to be pointed out. At the same time, the question should be put, regarding what type of critical edition we should adopt in order to respect, as far as possible, the true nature and the purpose of the puranic texts. On this subject, see the enlightening article by G. BONAZZOLI, *Some Observations on the Variant Readings in the Purāṇic Texts and their Imports for Critical Editions*, in « *Purāṇa* » XXVI, 2, 1984, pp. 113-33. The same scholar has edited a specimen of what could be called the critico-synoptical edition of a puranic text (or a « *collectio lectionum* », to use the editor's own words); see *The Pretakalpa of the Garuḍa-purāṇa* (Adhyāya 5), critically edited by G. Bonazzoli, Vārāṇasī, 1984.

*Mahābhārata*¹¹. The story is also narrated to some extent and in some detail at least in five *Mahāpurāṇa*-s (twice in the *Skanda*)¹² and is briefly related in the *Rāmāyaṇa* of Vālmīki¹³, while hints to the legend can be found in many other puranic texts¹⁴. A synoptical table of the different epic and puranic versions of the myth is given in Appendix III.

The study of the myth of Saudāsa in puranic texts was undertaken by me in order to clarify a passage of the story itself which, in the text of the *Gaṅgā-māhātmya*¹⁵, seemed to me not to be clear enough. At the end of the study the doubt was removed and I was also in the position of drawing some conclusions on the structure of this important myth.

It is inserted in the story of Viśvāmitra and Vasiṣṭha and their rivalry. It is well known that Viśvāmitra was of *kṣatriya* race and Vasiṣṭha was a brahmin and that both of them wanted the kings of the solar race of Ayodhyā as their *yajamāna*-s. In this context the story of Saudāsa does not aim only at maintaining the superiority of the *brāhmaṇa*-s, but also at justifying the union of the *purohita* Vasiṣṭha with the queen in order to ensure an offspring to the king: this fact, as we know, constitutes a precedent for the birth of Pāṇḍu and Dhṛtarāṣṭra from Vyāsa.

Through the analysis of the different versions of the myth the following structural nucleus of the story can be drawn:

1. The king commits a *fault* which consists in the disrespect of his *guru*.
2. For this reason he suffers a curse and is condemned to live as a *rākṣasa* for a period of twelve years.

11. Cfr. *MBh* I, 176-177 and 182 (= crit. ed. I, 166-168 and 173); for a translation following the text established by the critical edition see *The Mahābhārata. I. The Book of the Beginning*, Translated and Ed. by J. A. B. van BUITENEN, University of Chicago Press, 1973, Phoenix Edition, 1980, pp. 254, 333-37 and 343f. In *MBh* I, 122, 21b-24 (= crit. ed. I, 113, 21b-24; cfr. van Buitenen's translation, p. 254), Pāṇḍu reminds Kuntī that Kalmāṣapāda begot a child with the union of his wife and Vasiṣṭha and that, in the same way, Pāṇḍu himself and Dhṛtarāṣṭra were born from Vyāsa. The episode of Kalmāṣapāda is, therefore, an illustrious precedent for the origin of the Pāṇḍava and Kaurava families, and that is the reason why it is included in the great « poem » of the Bhārata-s.

12. Cfr. *BhP* IX, 9, 20-39; *SP* IV: *Koṭirudrasaṃhitā*, ch. 10; *SkP* III, iii, 2, 16-141 and 143-161; *SkP* VI, 53, 17-19; *VP* IV, 4, 40-70; *NāP* I, 9, 3-144.

13. Cfr. *Rām* VII, 65, 10-37.

14. Cfr. *LP* 64, 2-3 (the *rākṣasa* Rudhira penetrates the body of Kalmāṣapāda in order to kill Śakti and his 99 brothers; such a detail is found also in the *MBh*, where Viśvāmitra orders the *rākṣasa* Kimpkara to enter the body of the king); *LP* 66, 26cd-28ab = *VāP* II, 26, 175cd-176 = *BṇḍP* II, iii, 63, 176f (Vasiṣṭha begets a son, Aśmaka, of the wife of Saudāsa Mitrasaḥa Kalmāṣapāda for the perpetuation of the line of Ikṣvāku); *VāP* I, 2, 10ab (king Kalmāṣapāda is cursed by Śakti) = *BṇḍP* I, i, 2, 11ab (with the variant *śakraś*° instead of *śaptaś*°); *MtP* 12, 46 (only the name of Kalmāṣapāda is given); *GP* I, 138, 33 (only the three names are given).

15. Cfr. *PmG-GM* III, 85cd-87 = *NāP* I, 9, 143f.

3. The king-*rākṣasa* cannot but commit other faults, among which a *brahmahatyā*, which is aggravated by the fact that the victim is indulging in a sexual intercourse.
4. He receives, therefore, a second curse that he will die as soon as he is united with a woman.
5. After twelve years the king is liberated from the body of *rākṣasa*, thanks to the sprinkling with holy water, but he must request his *guru* to procure an offspring to him.

It seems that in the first version of the myth (the one preserved — as far as this detail is concerned — in the *Mahābhārata*) the fault of the king was evident and intentional: it consisted, in fact, in his refusal of giving way to a brahmin. In an apparently later version, the fault arises out of a vengeance against the king himself and consists in presenting — willingly (*MBh*) or unwillingly (other sources) — human flesh as food to the *guru*. The effect of the curse is then limited to a period of twelve years, after the realisation of the fact that the king had actually been deceived in acting so.

The fact that the king, in his turn, wants to curse the *guru* himself, although he does not do so, is perhaps an enlargement either to explain or to justify the name *Kalmāṣapāda*. And the same can be said of the *brahmahatyā* persecuting the king like a *piśāci* until he is liberated completely from this fault, thanks to the series of his devotional practices in the *tīrtha*-s.

It is also interesting to note that in the second of the two versions given in the *Skanda-Purāṇa* the king is not presented as going for hunting, but as performing a sacrifice: in both cases it is a matter of definite prerogatives of the royal race, connected with the function typical of the *kṣatriya*-s.

On the whole, the meaning of the story seems evident: *dharma* is always to be respected, and also the *brāhmaṇa*-s must be respected, because they are the first and the foremost guardians of *dharma* itself. Among the brahmins, everybody must respect his own *guru*. The curse lasting twelve years seems to allude to the life in the *saṃsāra* for a whole cosmic cycle¹⁶. The faults unwillingly committed are the unavoidable fruits of *karman* (which — it is worth noting — is explicitly alluded to only in the *Nārada-Purāṇa* text), while the fact that the king, being cursed, abstains from sexual intercourse, seems to convey the idea of *sannyāsa* from the wordly life and thus to introduce the final goal, which is *mokṣa*.

This leads me to arrive to a conclusion: it is not possible either to study or to completely and correctly understand a particular puranic

16. This cycle, called *mahāyuga*, lasts for 12.000 years of the gods and is followed by a cosmic night of the same length (the 12 years of Madayanti's pregnancy?).

text without taking into consideration the parallel texts which can be found in the epics and other *Purāṇa*-s. The eighteen *Purāṇa*-s are « eighteen sides of an only reality »¹⁷ and the true meaning of a story can not be understood without looking at it from all these sides¹⁸.

II. *Daśaharā*=*Dussehra* - Contribution for a correct etymology

Generally speaking, the etymology of the word *Dussehra* applied to the famous Indian festival lasting ten days is not correctly known. Not only common people, but also eminent western and Indian scholars think that it simply means « ten days », and this is the answer I always received whenever I inquired about the meaning of that word. I am now sure that it does not mean « ten days », nor the « tenth day », but « the day (*tithi*, f.) taking away the sins, which are of ten kinds » (*daśa-harā*). The name *daśa-harā* was first applied to the *tithi* on which the holy river Gaṅgā descended from the sky to the earth, or it referred to the ten characteristics of that day considered altogether (*daśayoga*), or it alluded to Gaṅgā herself. Our text (*PmG-GM* VI, 21 = *NāP* II, 40,21) states that the Jāhnavī came down from the mountain on the tenth day (*daśamī*) of the month of Jyeṣṭha. This statement is confirmed by other texts, dealing either with the river Gaṅgā or with the month of Jyeṣṭha, or with the *daśamī tithi*. The first text is found in the *Nārada-Purāṇa* itself (*NāP* I, 119,7-9): the combination of ten things (*daśayoga*), viz. the month Jyeṣṭha, the bright fortnight, the constellation *hasta*, Wednesday, *daśamī-tithi*, *gara(-karaṇa)*, *ānanda(-yoga)* and *vyatīpāta*, the moon in the zodiac sign *kanyā* and the sun in the zodiac sign *vr̥ṣa*, is regarded to be highly meritorious and is called *daśa-hara*:

harate daśapāpāni tasmād daśaharaḥ smṛtaḥ |¹⁹

The same attribute is given to the *tithi* in the *Brahma-Purāṇa*:

harate daśapāpāni tasmād daśaharā smṛtā |²⁰

The tenth day of the month of Jyeṣṭha *śuklapakṣa* is still considered very holy and a religious feast called Gaṅgā *Dussehra* (= *Gaṅgā-daśaharā*) is celebrated all over India with ablutions²¹. With the passage of time, the name *daśaharā* was also applied to the tenth day of the month of Āśvina, also called *viṣaya-daśamī*, commemorating the triumph of Rāma over Rāvaṇa. The name *Dussehra* (= *Daśaharā* in modern pronunciation), therefore, does not signify « ten days » (even less « the tenth day »), but

17. Cfr. S. PIANO-G. SPERA, *Puranic Studies in Italy*, in « *Purāṇa* » XXII, 2, 1980, p. 155.

18. As far as the myth of Saudāsa is concerned, I intentionally avoided making any textual comparison — which is the main purpose of another research presented here — and I studied just the contents.

19. Cfr. *NāP* I, 119, 9cd.

20. Cfr. *BrP* 63, 15cd. On the same subject see also *SkP* IV, i, 27, 79-81ab (*saṃharet trividhaṃ pāpam*, v. 79c) and *SkP* V, i, 68, 7.

21. Cfr. B. N. SHARMA, *Festivals of India*, New Delhi, 1978, pp. 21f and 83-6.

it is an attribute evoking the purifying power of that very day on which Gaṅgā, the « purifier », descended on earth. There are small differences among the various interpretations of the name *daśaharā*, and the word is explained as the one which « destroys ten lifetimes of sins »²², or better as « the destroyer of the ten kinds of sins » (*daśa-vidha-pāpa-harā*)²³, i.e. — I would like to say — « the destroyer of all the sins », since they are only ten classified into three groups (*kāyika*, *vācika* and *mānasika*)²⁴. *Daśaharā*=Dussehra is then the river, or the Goddess, or (better) the *tithi* which can destroy *all the sins* committed by men, and this appears to be the correct etymology of the word Dussehra.

III. Bhadramati-Itihāsa

It was again a hermeneutical problem which inspired me to look into the puranic literature for some text parallel to that of the *Nārada-Purāṇa* as far as the *Bhadramati-itihāsa* was concerned. In the very beginning of the story of Bhadramati the following verse is met:

śrutāni sarvaśāstrāṇi tena vedavidāniśam |²⁵

which seems to be clear enough. *BnP* 11,137b presents, nevertheless, the variant *tena vedavidā bale*, which is also acceptable, although it seems to be a *lectio facilior*, while, on the contrary, the correction *vedadivāniśam* (!) suggested by the reprint of the Veṅkaṭeśvar Press edition of the *Nārada-Purāṇa*... « with Textual Corrections » (!), brought out by Nag Publishers, Delhi, does not make sense at all. In addition, it is to be said that the funny reading of Nag Publishers' edition cannot be a misprint, because the « correction » has been written by hand while preparing the anastatic reproduction of the text. I thought it would have been useful to analyse other variant readings and I continued my study until I was able to trace in the *Skanda-Purāṇa* a version of the story of Bhadramati corresponding almost exactly to that in the *Nārada-Purāṇa*. The story, entitled *Bhadramaty-ākhyā-daridra-dviṣa-vṛttānta*, is narrated in *SkP* II, i, 20,3-64ab (= *NāP* I, 11, 139-167). The version contained in the *SkP* is longer: vv. 21ef-30 and 33-36 are not found in the *NāP*²⁶, while *śloka*-s 37-52 (*bhūmidānasya māhātmya*, recited by Kāminī, one among Bhadramati's wives) correspond to *NāP* I, 11,123-137, where they are recited by Viṣṇu-Vāmana himself. Certainly it is not by chance that the *SkP* states: *ity evaṃ nāradenoktaṃ śrutvā!* (II, i, 20,33ab). In the same context, in fact, there is one more parallel text, the *stotra* in honour of

22. Cfr. D. ECK, *Banaras: city of light*, London, 1983, p. 260.

23. Cfr. B. N. SHARMA, *op. cit.*, p. 83.

24. Cfr. *Manu* XII, 5-7.

25. Cfr. *PmG-UK* IV, 3ab = *NāP* I, 11, 140ab.

26. On this point, it is worth noting that, in the *SkP* text, *pāda*-s 30cd are identical to 21cd of the same text!

Viṣṇu, attributed to Kaśyapa in the *NāP* (I, 11, 72-81ab), while the *SkP* states that it was uttered by Bhādrāmātī (II, i, 20, 75-83)²⁷.

Therefore, it seems to me not only proper, but obligatory to take into consideration, for a complete and correct analysis of the *NāP* text, also the text of the *SkP*. As far as the passage under discussion is concerned, it reads, instead of *tena vedavidāniṣam, tena vipreṇa dhūmatā* (v. 4b): this reading can also be found in the *Skānda-Purāṇa* edited in Calcutta (Mor Edition, Gurumandal Series XX, vol. II, 1960) and seems equally acceptable as the one of the *NāP* text. In my opinion, it should at least be taken into consideration while editing the *Bhādrāmātī-itihāsa* contained in the *Nārada-Purāṇa*. In any case, there is no reason at all for introducing such a strange variant as the correction made in Nag Publishers' edition.

In another passage, in the very beginning of the *Bhūmidāna-praśaṃsā*, the text of the *SkP* is not only more complete, but also clearer than the corresponding one of the *NāP*. The *SkP* II, i, 20,37-38 reads as follows:

bhūmidānasya mātmyam śṛṇusva susamāhitam |
na ko 'pi gaditum śakto loke 'smin bhagavan prabho || 37 ||
bhūmidānāt param dānam na bhūtam na bhaviṣyati |
param nirvāṇam āpnoti bhūmido nātra saṃśayaḥ || 38 ||

while the *NāP* forms a *śloka* putting together, in the first line, the *pāda*-s 37a and 38b of the *SkP* text, the second line being identical to *SkP* 38cd. Also in this case — as in many others — the *BnP* follows the *SkP* and not the *NāP*, although, as we have seen (note 2), it is substantially a part of the latter.

If we take into consideration these small examples of textual criticism, we cannot but maintain that « critical » editors of the *Purāṇa*-s while editing them should take into account not only the manuscripts of each and every *Purāṇa*, but also the manuscripts of the many parallel texts which are found in other *Purāṇa*-s. That is to say that a critical edition of particular *itihāsa*-s, *mātmya*-s and so on should be prepared independently and not only as a part of a particular *Purāṇa*. They are, in fact, the *param guhyam* of the ancient Indian religious tradition which we should help in preserving for the posterity.

I would just make a brief observation by way of conclusion. The whole text of the *Gaṅgā-mātmya* eulogizes the practice which is peculiar to the Kali age²⁸: this practice is *dāna*. The divine Gaṅgā herself is nothing but a gift (*dāna*) made by Lord Śiva to king Bhāgīratha and through him to the whole of mankind: and also Gaṅgā, in fact, is the best among the *tīrtha*-s in the Kali age²⁹.

27. A collation of the three texts in their versions of the *NāP*, *SkP* and *BnP*, together with some critical notes, can be seen in Appendix IV.

28. Cfr. *NāP* I, 41, 89; *KP* I, 27, 17 and *LP* 39, 7. In *NāP* I, 41, 91 and *VP* VI, 2, 17 *saṃkīrtana* of Viṣṇu is indicated as the main means of salvation in the Kali-yuga.

29. Cfr. *NāP* II, 38, 20 and *KP* I, 35, 36.

Appendix I

TABLE OF CONCORDANCE

ABBREVIATIONS

PmG = *Purāṇō mē Gaṅgā*, Prayāg, 1952.GM = *Gaṅgā-māhātmya*.UK = *Utpatti-khaṇḍa*.NāP = *Nārada-Purāṇa*, Veṅkaṭeśvar Press, 1905.

| | <u>PmG-GM</u> | <u>NāP</u> | | <u>PmG-UK</u> | <u>NāP</u> |
|---|---------------|--|---|---------------|---|
| 1 | I, 1-2 | — | 4 | I, 1-52 | I, 10, 1-52 |
| | I, 3-4 | I, 1, 2-3 | | II, 1-67 | I, 11, 1-67 |
| | I, 5-28 | I, 1, 9; 11-12, 14, 15ab, 16ab, 17-18, 22-26, 29, 35; I, 2, 1; 3-4, 6-8, 12cd, 13-16 | | III, 1-71 | I, 11, 68-137 |
| | | | | IV, 1-60 | I, 11, 138-197 |
| | I, 29-35 | I, 6, 2-8 | 5 | V, 1-2 | I, 6, 68cd-69 |
| | I, 36-53 | I, 6, 11-28 | | V, 3-79 | I, 7, 1-77 |
| | I, 54-57 | I, 6, 30-33 | | VI, 1-46 | I, 8, 1-46 |
| | I, 58-59 | I, 6, 42-43 | | VII, 1-57 | I, 8, 47-102 ² |
| | I, 60-71 | I, 6, 57-69ab | | VIII, 1-35 | I, 8, 103-137 |
| | I, 72-73 | I, 8, 136-137 | | IX, 1-66 | I, 12, 26cd-39; I, 15, 160-169; I, 16, 1-43 |
| | | | | X, 1-73 | I, 16, 44-116 |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| 2 | II, 1-54 | I, 9, 1-54 | 6 | XI, 1-70 | II, 41, 1-70 |
| | III, 1-82ab | I, 9, 55-136 | | XII, 1-44 | II, 42, 1-44 |
| | III, 82cd | I, 9, 137ab | | | |
| | III, 83abcd | I, 9, 139cd-140ab | | | |
| 3 | III, 83ef-91 | I, 9, 141-148 | | XIII, 1-60 | II, 43, 1-60 |
| | | | | XIV, 1-69 | II, 43, 61-129 |
| | IV, 1-62 | II, 38, 2-63 | | | |
| | V, 1-11ab | II, 39, 2-12ab | | | |
| | V, 11cd-24 | II, 39, 13cd-26 | | | |
| | V, 25-45 | II, 39, 27cd-48 | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | VI, 1-35 | II, 40, 1-35 | | | |
| | VI, 36-52 | II, 40, 81-97 ¹ | | | |

1. NāP II, 40, 36-78ab is identical to NāP II, 39, 2cd-45ab, and vv. 78cd-80 of chapter 40 are the resumé of vv. 28ff of the same chapter.

2. The variation in the number of verses appears to be due to the different arrangement of verses in the two texts.

Appendix II: THE SEQUENCE OF THE TOPICS IN PMG AND NĀP

| <u>PmG</u> | = | <u>NāP</u> | <u>PmG</u> | <u>NāP</u> | <u>NāP</u> |
|------------------------|---|------------------|--|------------------------------------|------------------|
| 1. <u>GM I</u> | | I, 1/2/6 | Introduction and first eulogy of Gaṅgā | | I, 1/2/6 |
| 2. <u>GM II-III</u> | | I, 9 | The story of Saudāsa | The story of Bāhu and Sagara | I, 7-8 |
| 3. <u>GM IV-VI</u> | | <u>II, 38-40</u> | The great eulogy: part one | The story of Saudāsa | I, 9 |
| 4. <u>UK I-IV</u> | | I, 10-11 | The origin of the holy river (story of Vāmana Trivikrama) | | I, 10-11 |
| 5. a) <u>UK V-VIII</u> | | I, 7-8 | Story of Bāhu and Sagara | — | — |
| b) <u>UK IX-X</u> | | I, 12/15/16 | The story of Bhagīratha and the descent of the Gaṅgā on the earth | | I, 12/15/16 |
| 6. <u>UK XI-XIV</u> | | <u>II, 41-43</u> | The great eulogy: part two | The great eulogy: part one and two | <u>II, 38-43</u> |

Appendix III — THE STORY OF SAUDĀSA - SYNOPTICAL TABLE

| MBh | Rām | NāP | VP | BhP | SP | SkPI |
|--|---|-----|----|-----|--|---|
| The king goes hunting | | | | | | |
| He meets the brahmin Śakti, first among the 100 sons of Vasiṣṭha; he does not give way for him and whips him. Śakti curses the king that he will become a <i>rākṣasa</i> . While the king tries to appease him, Viśvāmitra orders the <i>rākṣasa</i> Kinkara to enter the body of the king in order to take advantage of the situation in his rivalry with Vasiṣṭha. While in the forest a brahmin asks the king for some meat; the king tells him to wait, but then he forgets the request, which he remembers only later, when he has retired into the <i>antatpura</i> . He orders the cook to bring some meat to the brahmin who is waiting in the forest; but as no meat is found, the king, under the influence of the devil, suggests to prepare human flesh. The cook cooks it and presents it to the brahmin. | He meets a couple of tiger- <i>rākṣasa</i> -s (on the banks of the Narmadā <i>NāP</i>); he kills one of them (the female one <i>NāP</i>) and the other one swears revenge. | | | | He meets and kills a demon (Kamaṭha <i>SP</i>) whose brother swears revenge. | SkPI |
| | After ascending the throne (<i>Rām</i>) / After long time (<i>NāP</i>) / Then (<i>VP</i>) the king performs an <i>aśvamedha</i> (a sacrifice <i>VP</i>) with Vasiṣṭha as officiant. At the end, the tiger- <i>rākṣasa</i> assumes the aspect of Vasiṣṭha and asks the king for some meat. Then he assumes the aspect of a cook and prepares human flesh giving it to the king, who keeps it in a golden plate (<i>NāP</i>) and afterwards presents it to Vasiṣṭha. | | | | The brother of the killed demon succeeds in becoming a cook of the king. In the day of his father's <i>śrāddha</i> , the king invites Vasiṣṭha (<i>SP</i>) / The cook prepares human flesh and presents it to Vasiṣṭha (<i>BhP</i> , <i>SkPI</i>). | Krūrabuddhi succeeds in presenting human flesh to Vasiṣṭha. |
| The brahmin visualizes what it is and confirms the curse of Śakti which becomes stronger as it has been repeated twice. The king — haunted by the <i>rākṣasa</i> — goes mad. | Vasiṣṭha visualizes that the food is human flesh and curses the king that he will become himself a devourer of human flesh, i.e. a <i>rākṣasa</i> . | | | | | |

SkPI

The king performs a sacrifice.

The sacrifice is disturbed by two *rākṣasa*-s: Krūrākṣa and Krūrabuddhi; the king kills the first one and the second one meditates revenge.

Krūrabuddhi succeeds in presenting human flesh to Vasiṣṭha.

The brother of the killed demon succeeds in becoming a cook of the king. In the day of his father's *śrāddha*, the king invites Vasiṣṭha (*SP*) / The cook prepares human flesh and presents it to Vasiṣṭha (*BhP*, *SkPI*).

After ascending the throne (*Rām*) / After long time (*NāP*) / Then (*VP*) the king performs an *aśvamedha* (a sacrifice *VP*) with Vasiṣṭha as officiant. At the end, the tiger-*rākṣasa* assumes the aspect of Vasiṣṭha and asks the king for some meat. Then he assumes the aspect of a cook and prepares human flesh giving it to the king, who keeps it in a golden plate (*NāP*) and afterwards presents it to Vasiṣṭha.

Vasiṣṭha visualizes that the food is human flesh and curses the king that he will become himself a devourer of human flesh, i.e. a *rākṣasa*.

He devours Sakti and then, with the instigation of Viśvā-mitra, also the remaining sons of Vasiṣṭha.

1. When Vasiṣṭha realizes / is informed by the king and his wife (Rām) / by Nārada arrived in the meantime (SkP2) about the situation, he — after the king's complaint (NāP, VP) — limits the effect of his curse to 12 years.
 2. The king, taking a handful of water, is ready to curse Vasiṣṭha on his turn, but he is dissuaded by the queen Madayanti / by Nārada (SkP2); he, therefore, throws the water on his own feet, which become spotted (hence the name Kalmāśapāda). Vasiṣṭha tells the king that he will be liberated after being sprinkled with a drop of the water of the Gaṅgā (NāP) / after killing Krūrābuddhi (SkP2).
- [Rām and NāP invert the order of the two episodes].

NāP VP

The king, living as a *rākṣasa* — on the banks of the Narmadā (NāP) —, meets a couple of *brāhmaṇa*-s enjoying sexual intercourse and kills the male. He is, therefore, cursed by the *brāhmaṇi* that he will die as soon as he is united with a woman/with his wife (VP).

NāP

The *brāhmaṇi* adds a second curse, that the *rākṣasa*-hood of the king will be permanent. The king flies into a rage, since he has received two curses for an only fault and curses, on his turn, the woman, who becomes a *piśācī* together with her son.

VP

The *brāhmaṇi* throws herself into the fire produced by a drop of tears of hers fallen on the ground.

[In the MBh, the whole episode of the *brāhmaṇi* is introduced only later (ch. 182)

The *brāhmaṇi* throws herself into the funeral pyre by which she has burnt the remains of her devoured husband.

in order to justify the king's request to Vasiṣṭha to procure an offspring to him].

Nāṭ

All those devils come together to a *vaṭa* inhabited by a *brahmarākṣasa*, who was previously a brahmin from Maṅgadha named Somadatta; he was reduced to that condition because of his indifference towards his *guru*. He describes the different types of *guru* according to the *śāstra-s*: thanks to the fact of listening to the contents of the sacred texts all the listeners get a merit which will lead them to liberation.

A brahmin from Kālīṅga comes, named Garga, bringing some water of the Gaṅgā and singing the praises of Śiva. The devils rush at him, but they stop on hearing the names of Śiva. Then, they beg Garga to sprinkle them with the holy water.

Garga sprinkles those devils with a drop of the holy water of the Gaṅgā: the *brāhmaṇi*, together with her son, and Somadatta reach the world of Hari after assuming divine bodies. King Kalmāṣapāda is liberated from the *rākṣasa*-hood.

Vasiṣṭha, after his long absence during which many times he tries, in vain, to kill himself not to be induced to revenge against Viśvāmitra, goes back to his *āśrama*. In the forest, he meets Kalmāṣapāda, who rushes at him in order to devour him.

Vasiṣṭha sprinkles the king with water purified by *mantra-s* and frees him from the devil. There is a lapse of twelve years from the curse of Śakti. The king promises not to offend the brahmins any more.

It happens what Vasiṣṭha has foretold and the king is liberated from the *rākṣasa*-hood.

After bearing the consequences of the curse in this way, the king goes back to his town.

The king cannot unite with his wife for fear of the curse of the *brāhmaṇī* — the first one NāP. / The king's wife avoids being united with him for fear of becoming a widow (ŚP, SkP1).

NāP VP

The king begets an offspring (the son Āsmaka) with the union of his wife Madayanti and Vasiṣṭha. She gives birth to the child cutting her own abdomen with a stone after remaining pregnant for twelve long years (MBh) / seven years (VP and BhP). The period of pregnancy of Vasiṣṭha's daughter-in-law also lasts for twelve long years and she gives birth to Parāśara.

Kalmāṣapāda remains anxious, but he is told by Sa-rasvati that, after exhausting his *karman* he will also obtain the supreme bliss. He goes to Vārāṇasī and bathes in the Gaṅgā for six months: in this way he is liberated from the curse of the *brāhmaṇī* (the second one).

[In the text of the *Nārada-Purāṇa* this episode is inserted before the king goes back to his town].

The king has to expiate the killing of brahmins which he has committed when he was a *rākṣasa*. He is liberated from that sin by visiting the *Bhrūṇagartā-tīrtha*.

Appendix IV

PARALLEL PURANIC TEXTS

- I. *Viṣṇustotra* — recited by Kaśyapa (*NāP* I, 11, 72-81ab).
 — recited by Bhadrāmāti (*SkP* II, i, 20, 75-83).
 — recited by Kaśyapa (*BnP* 11, 71-79).
72. namo namas te 'khalakāraṇāya namo namas te 'khalapālākāya 75/71
 namo namas te 'maranāyakāya namo namo daityavināśanāya
 °vimardanāya
 'khila°
73. namo namo bhaktajanapriyāya namo namaḥ sajjanarañjītāya 76/72
 pāpavidāraṇāya
 namo namo durjananāśanāya namo 'stu te 'smai jagadīśvarāya
 °k° tasmai
 °k° tasmai
74. namo namaḥ kāraṇavāmanāya nārāyaṇyāmitavikramāya 77/73
 saśārngacakrāsigaḍādhārāya namo 'stu tasmai puruṣottamāya
 śrī°
 śrī° 'si
75. namaḥ payorāśinivāsanāya namo 'stu saddhṛtkamalasthitāya 78ab/75ab
 °k° lakṣmīpataye 'vyayāya
 te hṛtkamalāsanāya
76. namo 'stu sūryādyamitaprabhāya namo namaḥ puṇyākathāgatāya 78cd/74cd
 °gatāgatāya
 sūryāṃśunibha°
 namo namo 'rkenduvilocanāya namo 'stu te yajñaphalapradāya 79ab/75ab
77. namo 'stu yajñāṅgavirājītāya namo 'stu te sajjanavallabhāya 79cd/75cd
 namo jagatkāraṇakāraṇāya namo 'stu śabdādivivarjītāya 80ab/76ab
 namaḥ
 namaḥ
78. namo 'stu te divyasukhapradāya namo namo bhaktamanogatāya 80cd/76cd
 °bhīṣṭa° °ramāya
 namo 'stu te dhīvāntavināśakāya namo 'stu te mandaradhārakāya 81ab/77ab
 namas te °dbhutakāraṇāya
 tasmai bhramanāśanāya °n°
79. namo 'stu te yajñavarāhanāmne namo hiraṇyākṣavidārakāya 81cd/77cd
 °ākhyavidāraṇāya
 namo 'stu te vāmanarūpabhāje namo 'stu te kṣatrakulāntakāya 82ab/78ab
 namo 'stu te rāvaṇamardanāya namo 'stu te nandasutāgrajāya 82cd/78cd
80. namas te kamalākānta namas te sukhadāyine 83ab/79ab
81. smṛtārtināśīne tubhyaṃ bhūyo bhūyo namo namaḥ 83cd/79cd
 śrītārti°

1. The *stotra* ends here in the *SkP*; in the *NāP* and *BnP* it presents four more *pāda*-s.

- II. *Bhūdānapraśaṃsā* — recited by Vāmana (*NāP* I, 11, 123-137)
 — recited by Kāminī (*SkP* II, i, 20, 37-52).
 — recited by Vāmana (*BnP* 11, 120-134).
123. bhūmidānasya māhātmyaṃ na bhūtaṃ na bhaviṣyati 37a+38b/120a+121b²
 paraṃ nirvāṇaṃ āpnoti bhūmido nātra saṃśayaḥ 38cd/121cd
bhūmidānān na
124. svalpām api mahīm dattvā śrotṛiṣyāyāhitāgnaye 39/122
 brahmalokaṃ avāpnoti punarāvṛttidurlabham
°varjitaṃ
125. bhūmidāḥ sarvadaḥ prokto bhūmido mokṣabhāg bhavet 40/123
 atidānaṃ tu taj jñeyaṃ sarvapāpapranaśanam
bhūmidānaṃ vṛṣādrau ca
 bhūmidānaṃ tu
126. mahāpātakayukto vā yukto vā sarvapātakaiḥ 41/124
 daśahastāṃ mahīm dattvā sarvapāpaiḥ pramucyate
127. satpātre bhūmidātā yaḥ sarvadānaphalaṃ labhet 42/125
 bhūmidānasamaṃ nānyat triṣu lokeṣu vidyate
bhūmidasya samo nānyas°
 bhūmidasya samo nānyas°
128. dvijāya vṛttihīnāya yaḥ pradadyān mahīm bale 43/126
°asya °asya °asya śubhām
°asya °asya
 tasya puṇyaphalaṃ vaktuṃ na kṣamo'bdaśatair aham
śeṣo nārhaḥ kadācana
 nāhaṃ varṣaśatair api
129. saktāya devapūjāsu vṛttihīnāya daityapa 44/127
 viprasya vṛttihīnasya sadācāryasya kasyacit³
°asya °asya bhūmipa
 svalpām api mahīm dadyād yasya viṣṇur na saṃśayaḥ
yo'lpām api dadyāt sa viṣṇur nātra
 dadyāt sa viṣṇur nātra
130. ikṣugodhūmatuvarīpūgavṛkṣādisamputā 45
°kedāra° (?)
 pṛthvī pradiyate yena sa viṣṇur nātra saṃśayaḥ
131. vṛttihīnāya viprāya daridrāya kuṭumbine 46/128
°asya °asya °asya °aḥ
°asya °asya °asya °aḥ
 svalpām api mahīm dattvā viṣṇusāyujyam āpnuyāt
°aśnute
 viṣṇoḥ sā°
132. saktāya devapūjāsu viprāyāḍhārikāṃ mahīm 47/129
°asya °asyāṭavikā mahī
°asya °asyāḍha°

2. The *SkP* and *BnP* have four more *pāda*-s here; the complete text of *SkP* 37-38 can be read on p. 382 of this paper.

3. Cfr. 133ab (= 44ab/127ab).

dattvā labheta gaṅgāyāṃ trirāstrasnānaṃ phalam
dattā bhavati
bhavati

133. viprāya vṛttihīnāya sadācāraratāya ca 48/130
°asya °asya °asya
°asya °asya °asya
droṇikāṃ pṛthivīm dattvā yat phalaṃ labhate śṛṇu
134. gaṅgātirthāśvamedhānāṃ śatāni vidhivan naraḥ 49/131
°tīre 'śva°
°tīre 'śva°
kṛtvā yat phalam āpnoti tad āpnoti sa puṣkalam
mahat phalam
mahat phalam
135. dadāti khārikāṃ bhūmiṃ daridrāya dvijāya yaḥ 50/132
bhārikāṃ (?) dvijataye
dvijataye
tasya puṇyaṃ pravakṣyāmi vadato me niśāmaya
mānātha bhagavan prabho
vadatas tan niśāmaya
136. aśvamedhasahasrāṇi vājapeyaśatāni ca 51/133
vidhāya jāhnavītīre yat phalaṃ tal labhed dhruvam
°ta saḥ
labhate dhruvam
137. bhūmidānaṃ mahādānaṃ atidānaṃ prakīrtitam 52/134
sarvāpāpraśāmanam apavargaphalapradam

III. Bhādramatītiḥāsa or Bhādramatyākhyādaridrādvijavṛttānta.

- narrated by Vāmana (NāP I, 11, 139-167).
— narrated by Sūta (SkP II, i, 20, 3-32; 56-64ab).
— narrated by Vāmana (BnP 11, 136-165ab).

139. āsīt purā dvijavaro brāhmakalpe mahāmatīḥ 3/136
vedavedāṅgapārakaḥ
°kalpo °munih
daridro vṛttihīnaśca nāmnā bhādramatir bale
°dvijaḥ
140. śrutāni sarvaśāstrāṇi tena vedavidāniśam 4/137
vipreṇa dhīmatā
bale
śrutāni ca purāṇāni dharmāśāstrāṇi sarvaśaḥ
141. abhavaṃs tasya śaṭpatnyaḥ śrutīḥ sindhur yaśovati 5/138
kṛtā
śrutā
kāminī mālinī caiva śobhā ceti prakīrtitāḥ
caiva
caiva °tā

142. āsu patniṣu tasyāsañ catvāriṃśacchatadvayam 6/139
tāsu °āsīt putrāṇām ca śata°
tāsu °asaṃśca° °trayam
putrāṇām asuraśreṣṭha sarve nityam bubhukṣitāḥ
te sarve tasya putrādyāḥ kṣudhayā paripīḍitāḥ
143. akimpcano bhadramatiḥ kṣudhārttān ātmajān priyāḥ 7/140
°ān
°ān
paśyan svayam kṣudhārttaś ca vilalāpākulendriyaḥ
°priyāḥ °āś
144. dhigjanma bhāgyarahitaṃ dhigjanma dharmavarjitaṃ 8ab/141ab
 dhigjanma dharmarahitaṃ dhigjanma khyātivarjitaṃ 8c+10b/142a+143b⁴
kīrti°
145. narasya bahvapatyasya dhigjanmaīśvaryavarjitaṃ 10cd/143cd
 aho guṇāḥ saumyatā ca vidvattā janma satkule 11ab/144ab
146. dāridryāṃbudhimagnasya sarvam etan na śobhate 11cd/144cd
 priyāḥ putrāś ca pautrāś ca bāndhavā bhrātaras tathā 12ab/145ab
147. śiṣyāś ca sarvamanujās tyajanty aiśvaryavarjitaṃ 12cd/145cd⁵
°e≠
°e≠
cāṇḍālo vā dviḥ vāpi bhāgyavān eva pūjyate 13cd/146ab
148. daridraḥ puruṣo loka śavaval lokaninditaḥ 14/146cd
 aho sampatsamāyukto niṣṭhuro vāpy aniṣṭhuraḥ 147ab
149. guṇahīno 'pi guṇavān mūrkhō vāpy atha paṇḍitaḥ 15ab/147cd⁶
vāpi sa
vā'pi sa
aiśvaryaguṇayuktaś cet pūjya eva na saṃśayaḥ 16ab/148cd
150. aho daridratā duḥkhaṃ tatrapyāśātiduḥkhaḍā 16cd/149
 āśābhibhūtāḥ puruṣāḥ duḥkhaṃ aśnuvate 'kṣayam 17
°śā *kṣaṇāt*
svayam
151. āśāyā dāsā ye dāsās te sarvalokasya [...] 18/150ab
ye dāsā
dāsavad dāsāḥ caiva hi
āśā dāsī yeṣāṃ teṣāṃ dāsāyate lokaḥ [...]
152. māno hi mahatāṃ loka dhanam akṣayam ucyate 150cd
 mānaṃ
 tasmin āśākhyaripuṇā māne naṣṭe daridratā 151ab
 tad evāśākha° prapaṣṭāho

4. The *SkP* and *BnP* add six *pāda*-s here; they are, in the order of the *SkP*, as follows: *dhigjanmātithyavarjitaṃ* (8d/142b), *dhigjanmācārarahitaṃ* (9a/142c), *dhigjanmajñānavarjitaṃ* (9b/142d, with the variant *yācñayā ratam*), *dhigjanmayatnarahitaṃ* (9c/141c, with the variant *°niratam*), *dhigjanmasukhavarjitaṃ* (9d/141d), *dhigjanma-bandhurarhitaṃ* (10a/143a).

5. The *SkP* has two more *pāda*-s here: *iti niścitya matimān dhīro bhadramatir dvijaḥ* (13ab); cfr. *NāP* I, 11, 158cd.

6. The *SkP* and *BnP* add two more *pāda*-s here: *niṣṭhuro vā guṇī vāpi | dhar-mahino 'tha ('pī) vā naraḥ* (15cd/148ab).

153. sarvaśāstrāstravettāpi daridro bhāti mūrkhavat 19/151cd
°rtha°
 naiṣkīṃcanyamahāgrāhagrastānām ko vimocakaḥ 152ab
akiṇ° *nāsti mocakaḥ*
 akīṃcanyamahārogragrastānām
154. aho duḥkham aho duḥkham maho(?) duḥkhadaridratā 20/152cd
duḥkham aho duḥkham da°
duḥkham aho duḥkham da°
 tatrāpi putrabhāryānām bāhulyam atiduḥkhadam 152ef
°dārāṇām
°dārāṇām
155. evam uktvā bhadramatiḥ sarvaśāstrārthapāragah 21/153'
°kovidaḥ
 anyaiśvaryapadaṃ dharmaṃ manasā 'cintayat tadā (21cd=30cd)
atyaiś° *°yamstadā*
 alpaiśvaryapadaṃ dharmyaṃ
156. bhūmidānaṃ viniścitya sarvadānottamottamam 31ab/154ab
 dānena yo 'numantāti sa eva kṛtavān purā
157. prāpakam paramaṃ dharmaṃ sarvakāmaphalapradam 31cd/154cd
paralokasya
 pāvakaṃ dharmyaṃ
 dānānām uttamaṃ dānaṃ bhūdānaṃ parikīrtitam 32ab/155ab
158. yad dattvā samavāpnoti yad yad iṣṭatamaṃ naraḥ 32cd/155cd
 iti niścitya matimān dhīro bhadramatir bale 156ab⁸
159. kauśāmbināmanagarīm kalatrāpatyayug yayau 56/156cd
susāliṃ *°trasahito yayau*
°trasahito yayau
 sughoṣanānaviprendraṃ sarvaiśvaryasamanvitam 157ab
 sughoṣaṃ nāma vi°
160. gatvā yācitavān bhūmiṃ pañcahastāyatām bale 57/157cd
dvijaḥ
 sughoṣo dharmaniratas taṃ nirikṣya kuṭumbinam 158ab
161. manasā priyamāṇena samabhyarcyedam abravīt 58/158cd
°āpannam *°ainam°*
 prītim āpannaḥ *°ainam°*
 kṛtārtho 'haṃ bhadramate saphalaṃ mama janma ca 159ab
'smi
162. matkulam pāvanam jātam tvadanugrahato dvija 58ef/158cd
cānaghaṃ *tvaṃ hi grāhyo 'si me yataḥ*
cā'naghaṃ jātam anugraho 'smi te yataḥ
 ity uktvā taṃ samabhyarcya sughoṣo dharमतatparaḥ 59ab/160ab

7. At this point, in the *SkP* version, Kāminī (one among the wives of Bhadramati) suggests him to bathe in the sacred place named Veṅkaṭācala and reminds that her father went there on Nārada's advice and obtained a great advantage. Then she recites the *Bhūmidānapraśaṃsā* (vv. 37-52 = *NāP* I, 11, 123-137). After listening to the words of his wife, Bhadramati goes to Suśālī (v. 56).

8. These two *pāda*-s are lacking in the *SkP* version, where they are found in 13ab, with the variant *°dvijaḥ* in the place of *bale*; v. *supra*, n. 5.

163. pañcahastamitām bhūmiṃ dadau tasmai mahāmatih 59cd/160cd
 °pramāṇāṃ tām
 °pramāṇan tu
 pṛthivī vaiṣṇavī puṇyā pṛthivī viṣṇupālītā 60ab/161ab
164. pṛthivyās tu pradānena priyatām me janārdanaḥ 60cd/161cd
 mantreṇānena daityendra sughoṣas taṃ dvijottamam 61ab/162ab
 viprendrāḥ °eśvaram
 °eśvaram
165. viṣṇubuddhyā samabhyarcya tāvatim pṛthiviṃ dadau 61cd/162cd
 so 'pi bhadramatir vipro dhīmatā yācitām bhuvam 62ab/163ab
 sa bhadramataye viprā dhīmāṃstām
 dhīmāṃstām
166. dattavān haribhaktāya śrotriyāya kuṭumbine 62cd/163cd
 sughoṣo bhūmidānena koṭivamśasamanvitaḥ 63ab/164ab
167. prapede viṣṇubhavanam yatra gatvā na śocati 63cd/164cd
 bale bhadramatiś cāpi yataḥ prārthitavāñ chriyam 64ab/165ab
 vipro putradārasamanvitaḥ
 °śri°
168. sthitavān viṣṇubhavane °... 64cd/165cd
 gato veṅkaṭaśailendram...

9. The story continues in the *NāP* for some more *śloka*-s (168-172ab), dealing with the subsequent births of Bhadramati until he attains *mokṣa*; according to the *SkP* version, Bhadramati pays a visit to Veṅkaṭeśvara and, after bathing, makes a gift of land; Viṣṇu is pleased, appears to him and is eulogized by Bhadramati with the same *stotra* (vv. 75-83) which the *NāP* ascribes to Kaśyapa (vv. 72-81ab).

LIST OF THE COLLATED TEXTS

| | <i>PmG</i> | <i>NāP</i> | <i>BnP</i> | <i>SkP</i> |
|--|---------------|----------------|---------------|-------------------------|
| I. <i>Viṣṇustotra</i> | | | | |
| | UK III, 5-15 | I, 11, 72-81ab | 11, 71-79 | II, i, 20, 75-83 |
| II. <i>Bhūdānapraśamsā</i> or <i>Bhūmidānamāhātmya</i> | | | | |
| | UK III, 57-71 | I, 11, 123-137 | 11, 120-134 | II, i, 20, 37-52 |
| III. <i>Bhādramatīhāsa</i> or <i>Bhādramativṛttānta</i> | | | | |
| | UK IV, 2-30 | I, 11, 139-167 | 11, 136-165ab | II, i, 20, 3-32+56-64ab |

Appendix V: ABBREVIATIONS

- AP = *Āgneya-Mahāpurāṇam*, Bombay, Veṅkaṭeśvara ed., 1901.
- BhP = *Bhāgavata-Purāṇam* Cūrṇikāsametaṁ, Bombay, Veṅkaṭeśvara ed., 1971. *Śrīmadbhāgavata-Mahāpurāṇam*, Gītā Press ed., Gorakhpur, 1965^a.
- BrP = *Brahma-Purāṇam* (hindī anuvādasahitam), Prayāga, 1976.
- BṇḍP = *Brahmaṇḍa-Purāṇam*, Bombay, Veṅkaṭeśvara ed., 1935.
- BvP = *Brahmavaivarta-Purāṇam*, Ānandāśrama ed., 2 vols., Poona, 1935.
- BnP = *Bṛhannāradiya-Purāṇam*, ed. by Hṛṣikeś Śāstrī, Caukhambā Amarbhārtī Prakāśan, Vārāṇasī, 1891 (2nd ed., 1975).
- DbhP = *Devībhāgavata-Purāṇam*, Bombay, Veṅkaṭeśvara ed., 1919.
- GM = *Gaṅgā-Māhātmyam*.
- GP = *Garuḍa-Purāṇam*, ed. by Rāmaśaṅkara Bhaṭṭācārya, Kāśī Saṁskṛta Granthamālā 165, Vārāṇasī, 1964.
- KP = *Kūrma-Purāṇam* (with English Transl.), crit. ed. by A. S. Gupta, Vārāṇasī, 1972.
- LP = *Liṅga-Purāṇam*, ed. by Jivānanda Vidyāsāgara, Calcutta, 1885.
- MBh = *Mahābhārataṁ*, Citraśālā Mudraṇālaya, 7 vols., Poona, 1929-36.
- Manu = *Manusmṛtiḥ*, Medhātithi-bhāṣya-samalaṅkṛtā (Gurumaṇḍala Granthamālā 24), 2 vols., Calcutta, 1967-71 (Mor Edition).
- MārP = *Mārkaṇḍeya-Purāṇam*, ed. by Jivānanda Vidyāsāgara, Calcutta, 1879.
- MtP = *Matsya-Purāṇam*, Bombay, Veṅkaṭeśvara ed., 1895.
- NāP = *Nārada-Purāṇam*, Bombay, Veṅkaṭeśvara ed., 1905.
- PP = *Padma-Purāṇam*, Ānandāśrama ed., 4 vols., Poona, 1893-94.
- PmG = *Purāṇō mē Gaṅgā*, compiled and translated into Hindī by Rām Pratāp Tri-pāthī, ed. by Dayāśaṅkar Dube, Prayāg, 1952.
- Rām = *Śrīmadvālmīkirāmāyaṇam*, Kalyāṇa, 3 vols., Bombay, 1934-35.
- SP = *Siva-Mahāpurāṇam*, Veṅkaṭeśvara ed., Bombay, 1965.
- SkP = *Skanda-Purāṇam*, Veṅkaṭeśvara ed., 7 vols., Bombay, 1908-09.
- SK = *The Svarga-khaṇḍa of the Padma-Purāṇa*, crit. ed. by A. Chatterjee Śāstrī, Vārāṇasī, 1972.
- UK = *Utpatti-khaṇḍam*.
- VāmP = *Vāmana-Purāṇam* (with English Transl.), crit. ed. by A. S. Gupta, Vārāṇasī, 1968.
- VarP = *Varāha-Purāṇam* (with English Transl.), crit. ed. by A. S. Gupta, Vārāṇasī, 1981.
- VāP = *Vāyu-Purāṇam*, Veṅkaṭeśvara ed., Bombay, 1933.
- VP = *Viṣṇu-Purāṇam*, Hindī anuvāda sahitam, Gītā Press ed., Gorakhpur, 1984^a.